

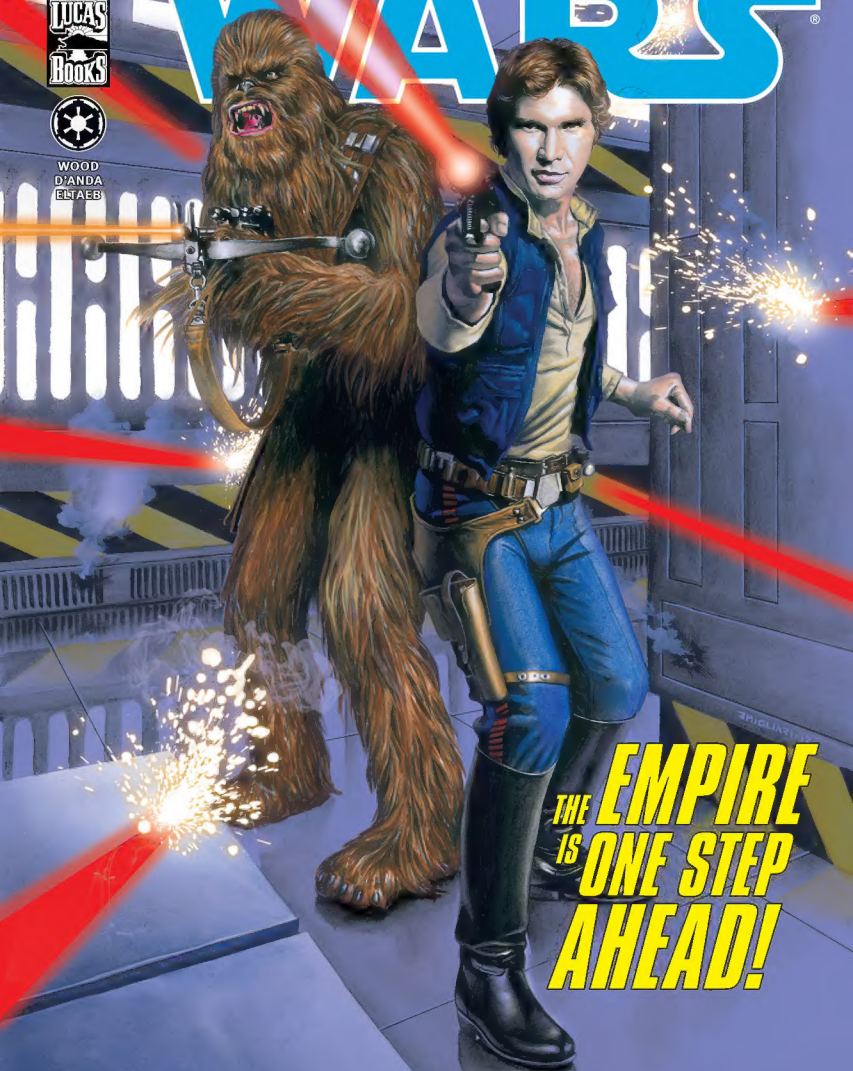


#51



WOOD
D'ANDA
ELTAEB

STAR WARS



*THE EMPIRE
IS ONE STEP
AHEAD!*

STAR WARS®

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RODOLFO MIGLIARI

STAR WARS®



THE REBELLION (FROM THE BATTLE OF YAVIN TO FIVE YEARS AFTER)

Open resistance begins to spread across the galaxy in protest of the Empire's tyranny. Rebel groups unite, and the Galactic Civil War begins. This era begins with the Rebel victory that secured the Death Star plans, and ends a year after the death of the Emperor high over the forest moon of Endor. This is the era in which the events in A New Hope, The Empire Strikes Back, and Return of the Jedi take place.

The events in this story take place shortly after the events in Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope.

After their resupply mission for the Rebel Alliance is exposed to the Empire, Han Solo and Chewbacca seek refuge in the Coruscant underworld, where they are being hunted by Boba Fett. Meanwhile, at the construction site of the second Death Star, Darth Vader, having fallen from the Emperor's favor, finds an unexpected ally in the Force...

Luke Skywalker, who has been grounded for breaking mission protocol, receives a warning from the ghost of Ben Kenobi—which prompts him to further disobey orders...

And Princess Leia and her elite X-wing squadron are cornered by Colonel Bircher's Star Destroyers and his TIE interceptor group—forcing Leia and her pilots to make a stand... possibly their last.

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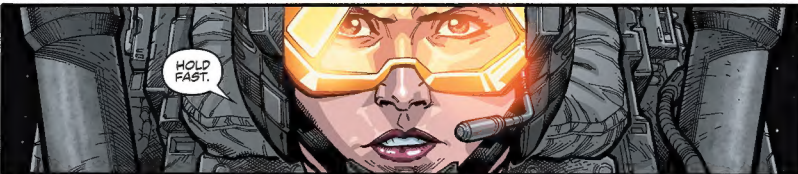
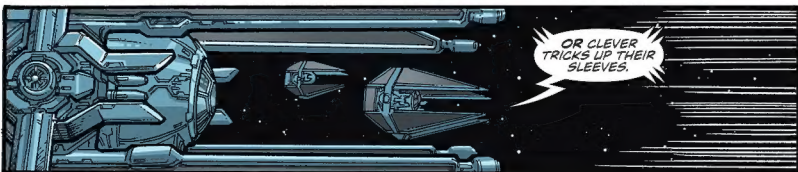


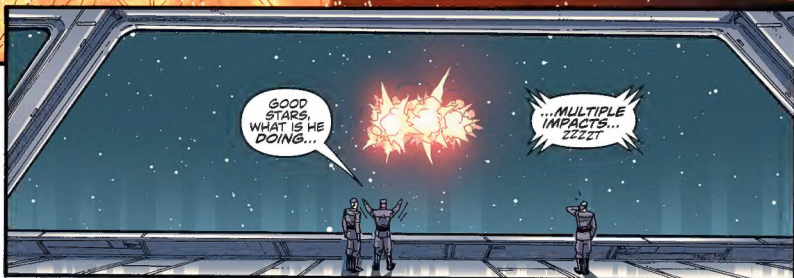
LEIA,
WEDGE--
TORPEDOES
AWAY!

PROXIMITY
SET TO THREE
HUNDRED METERS,
ALL SAFETIES OFF.
STAY CLEAR OF
THEM...

CONFIRMING
YOUR FOUR,
TESS.







GOOD
STARS,
WHAT IS HE
DOING...

...MULTIPLE
IMPACTS...
ZZZZT



BLASTED
REBELS!

SQUADRON,
EVADE PATTERN
DELTA DELTA VICTOR.
YOU ARE FREE TO
ENGAGE, PICK YOUR
TARGETS AT
WILL.



COMMAND,
WE ARE ELEVEN
DOWN...

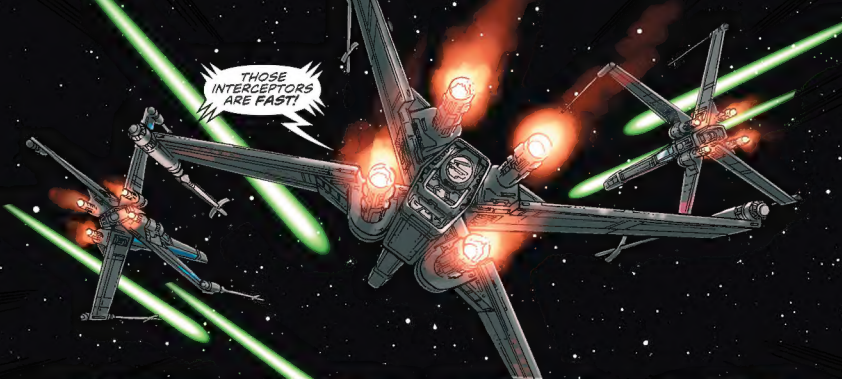
KKZZZTTT
ADVISE RETURN
TO HANGAR BAY
ZZZZKKT

NEGATIVE.



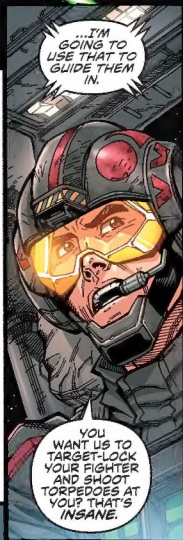
THIS IS OUR
MOMENT OF
TRIUMPH!





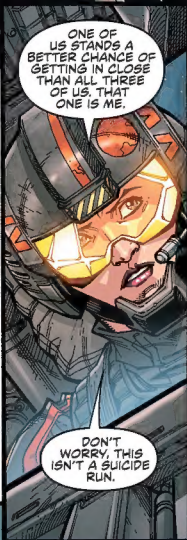
OKAY, LISTEN. WE HAVE **SECONDS**, PROBABLY, BEFORE THEY FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.

I WANT YOU TO LINK YOUR TARGETING COMPUTERS TO MY EMERGENCY TRANSPONDER SIGNAL...



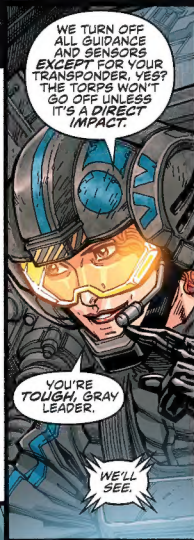
...I'M GOING TO USE THAT TO GUIDE THEM IN.

YOU WANT US TO TARGET-LOCK YOUR FIGHTER AND SHOOT TORPEDOES AT YOU? THAT'S INSANE.



ONE OF US STANDS A BETTER CHANCE OF GETTING IN CLOSE THAN ALL THREE OF US. THAT ONE IS ME.

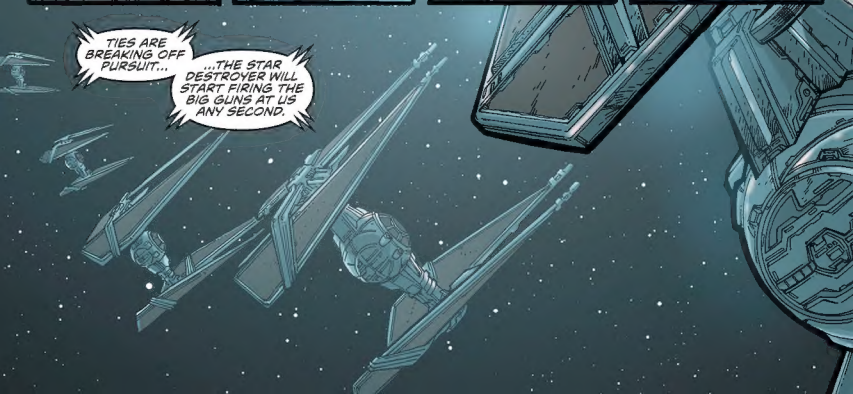
DON'T WORRY. THIS ISN'T A SUICIDE RUN.

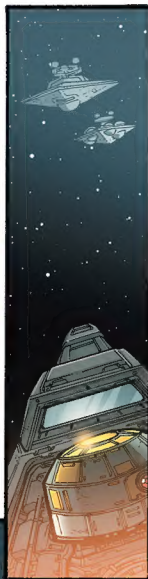
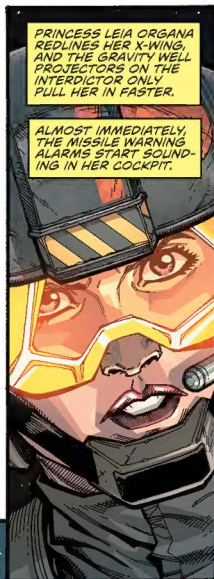


WE TURN OFF ALL GUIDANCE AND SENSORS EXCEPT FOR YOUR TRANSPONDER. YES? THE TORPS WON'T GO OFF UNLESS IT'S A DIRECT IMPACT.

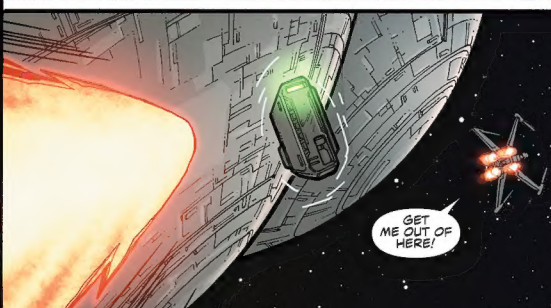
YOU'RE TOUGH, GRAY LEADER.

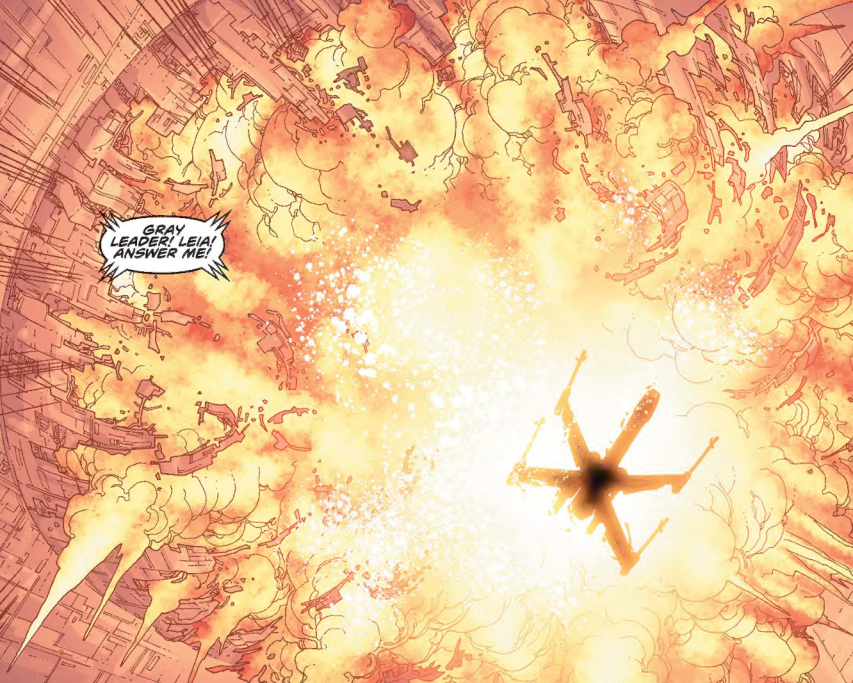
WE'LL SEE.



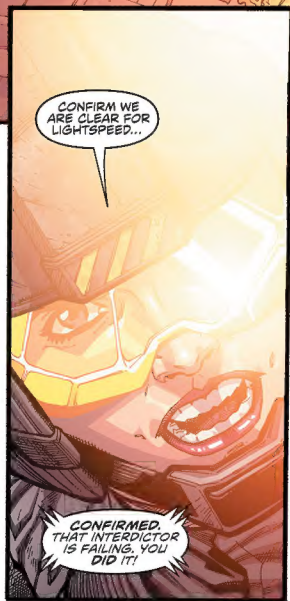


...AND THEN...



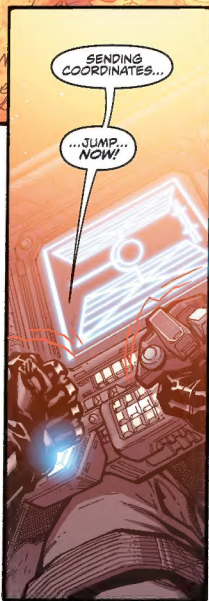


GRAY
LEADER, LEIA!
ANSWER ME!



CONFIRM WE
ARE CLEAR FOR
LIGHTSPEED...

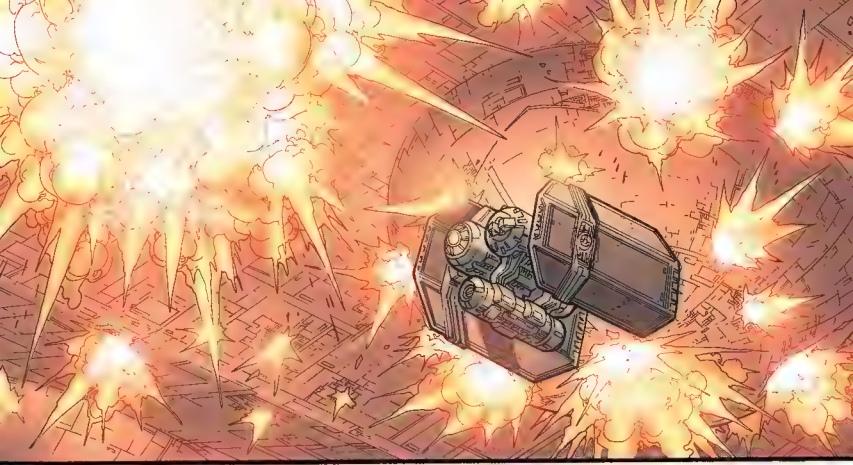
CONFIRMED.
THAT INTERDICTOR
IS FAILING, YOU
DID IT!



SENDING
COORDINATES...

...JUMP...
NOW!



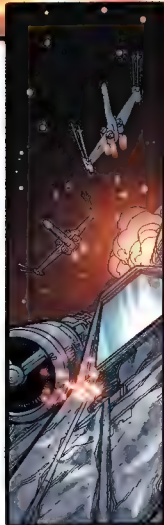


WEDGE...
TESS--



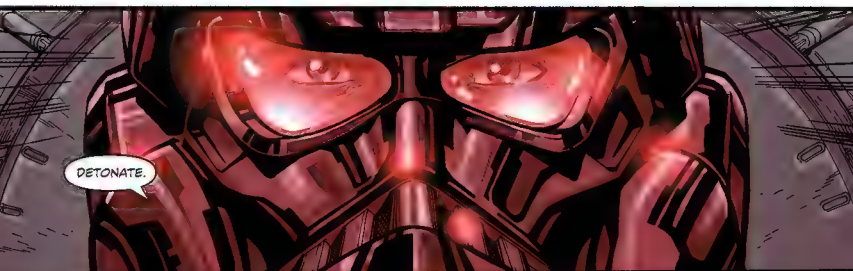
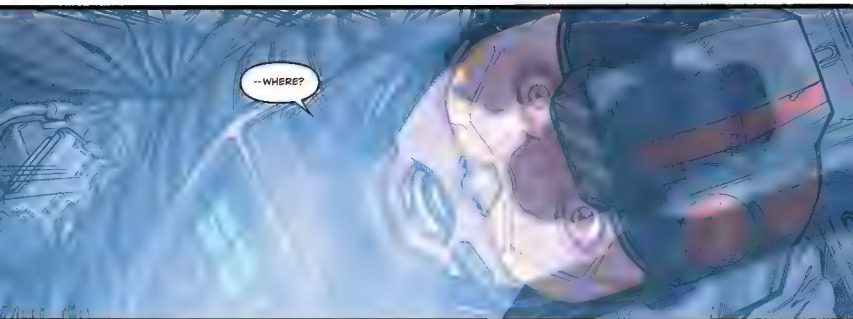
-- I'LL
BE BRINGING
US OUT OF THE
FIRST LEG IN
SEVEN, SIX,
FIVE...

IS
SOMETHING
FOLLOWING
US? CHECK YOUR
SHORT-RANGE
SCOPES!



IT'S
A TIE!

HOW
DID THEY
KNOW--



IMPERIAL CENTER.

THE CORUSCANT UNDERWORLD.

ALL
I'M SAYING,
CHEWIE, IS I
DON'T TRUST
THAT GUY.

I'VE DOCKED
THE FALCON IN SOME
ROUGH SPOTS IN THE
PAST, BUT YOU COULD
PRACTICALLY SEE HIM
DISMANTLING HER
WITH HIS EYES.

WE BETTER
HAVE A PLAN SOON,
OR WE'RE GONNA
BECOME PERMANENT
RESIDENTS OF
THIS PLACE.

RWUFF
WUFF

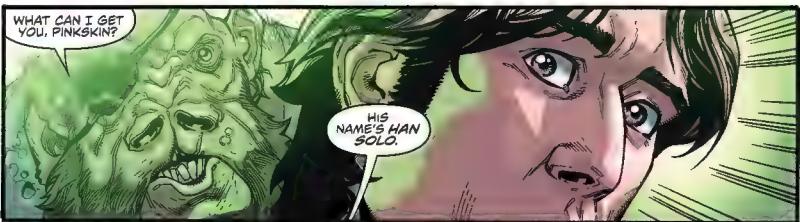
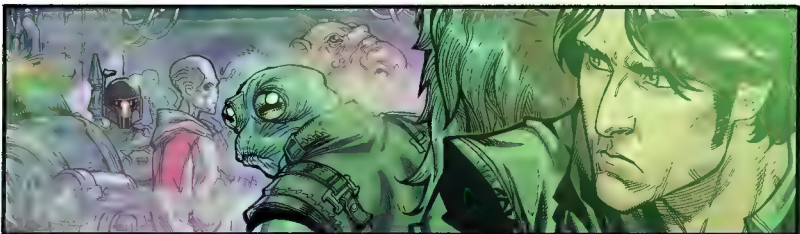
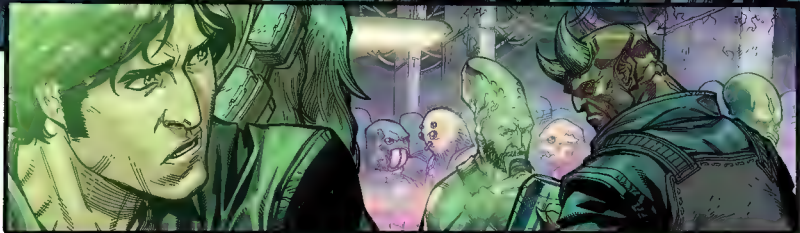
YOU CAN
SAY THAT
AGAIN.

LOOK, I
NEED TO GET OUT
OF SIGHT. THINK
YOU CAN HANDLE
INQUIRIES ON
YOUR OWN?

WE
NEED FORGED
CLEARANCES -- NEW
STARSHIP REGISTRATION
AND PASS CODES -- AN
ENTIRE NEW IDENTITY.
AND WE NEED IT DATED
AND SLICED INTO THE
IMPERIAL DATA
CORES.

ROOO
OOOAAAARR?
ARRRRR?

SURPRISE
ME!





YOU'RE
QUITE A
CELEBRITY.

TELL ME
ABOUT IT.

YOU MAY
NOT LEAVE
THIS PLACE
ALIVE.

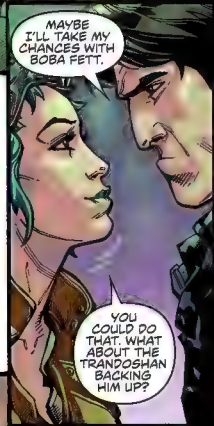
YOU'D BE
SURPRISED AT
HOW OFTEN I
HEAR THAT.

ARE YOU
OFFERING
ME HELP?



I'M
SELLING
YOU A WAY
OUT OF
HERE.

YOU HAVE A
BOUNTY ON YOUR HEAD,
SOLO. IT'S CONSIDERABLE.
I'M THINKING YOU PAY ME THAT
PLUS TEN PERCENT TO GET
YOU OFFWORLD.



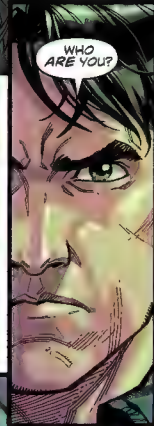
MAYBE
I'LL TAKE MY
CHANCES WITH
BOBA FETT.

YOU
COULD DO
THAT. WHAT
ABOUT THE
TRANDOSHAN
BACKING
HIM UP?

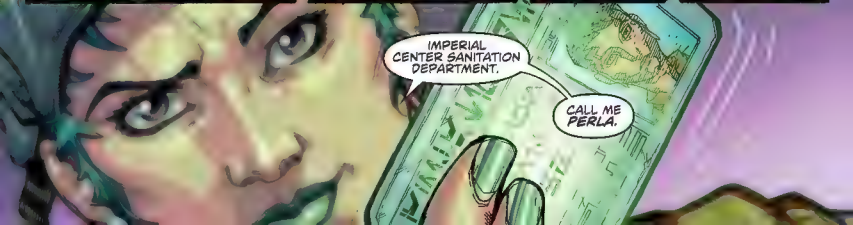


BOSSK'S
HERE?

COME
WITH ME,
SOLO, AND
LIVE.



WHO
ARE YOU?



IMPERIAL
CENTER SANITATION
DEPARTMENT.

CALL ME
PERLA.



BOBA FETT, BOUNTY HUNTER AND MANDALORIAN WARRIOR, IS A MAN WITH TWO MASTERS.

JABBA THE HUTT'S BOUNTY ON HAN SOLO'S HEAD REPRESENTS A LOT OF CREDITS, AND WITH CREDITS COME SHIP UPGRADES AND WEAPONS, AND PERHAPS THE SECURITY TO NEVER HAVE TO TAKE A HUTT CONTRACT AGAIN.

DARTH VADER'S OFFER ON THE CORELLIAN, SPECIFICALLY HIS SHIP, IS SMALLER, BUT WITH A GREATER PROMISE OF FUTURE OPPORTUNITY.

BUT WHILE BOBA FETT MULLED HIS OPTIONS, THE BRASH SMUGGLER HAS VANISHED.

BUT HERE IN THE CORUSCANT UNDERWORLD, THERE ARE FEW PLACES FOR A HUMAN TO HIDE.

BOSSK?

HE DIDN'T COME THIS WAY.





BILLIONS OF TONS OF WASTE IS GENERATED ON ANY GIVEN DAY...

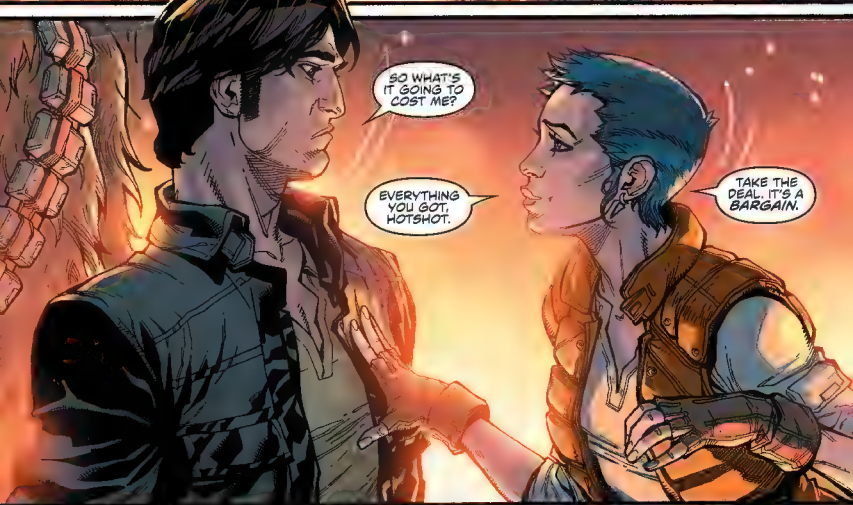
...AND SO CORUSCANT SANITATION IS GIVEN TREMENDOUS LEEWAY. WE OPERATE A FLEET OF OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND MEGA-BARGES, AND WE RARELY GET SEARCHED.

SOUNDS WIDE OPEN FOR CORRUPTION.



YOU CALL YOURSELF A SMUGGLER, SOLO, AND I'LL GRANT YOU YOUR REPUTATION...

...BUT I'M OPERATING ON A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL HERE.



SO WHAT'S IT GOING TO COST ME?

EVERYTHING YOU GOT, HOTSHOT.

TAKE THE DEAL. IT'S A BARGAIN.

THE REBEL FLEET.

THE NAV
COMPUTER'LL TAKE
A FEW MINUTES. LEIA
HAS MULTIPLE ROUTES
LOGGED AND A FEW
LAYERS OF SECURITY
I HAVE TO GET
THROUGH...

...GOOD
THING THE
DECRYPTION KEYS
ARE HARD-WIRED
INTO THESE
X-WINGS.

LUKE...

...WHO'S
BEN KENOBI?

HE'S
A--I MEAN,
HE WAS A GREAT
MAN. ALL MY LIFE
I KNEW HIM AS A
LOCAL ODDITY,
A STRANGE
RECLUSE.

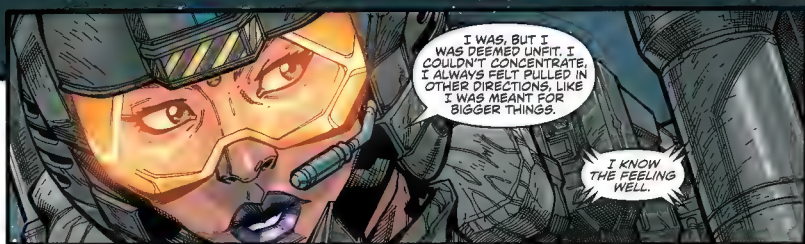
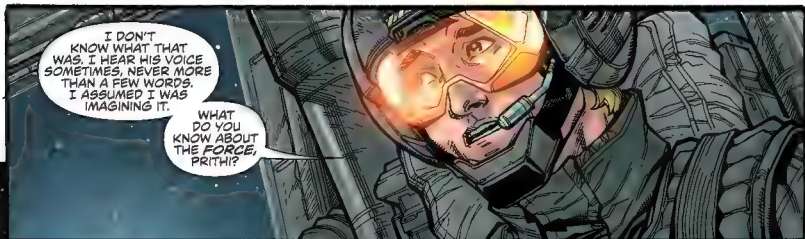
TURNS OUT
HE'S THIS OLD JEDI--
PROBABLY FAMOUS--
AND HE KNEW MY FATHER.
I HAVE TO THINK HE MUST
HAVE BEEN WATCHING
OVER ME MY WHOLE
LIFE.

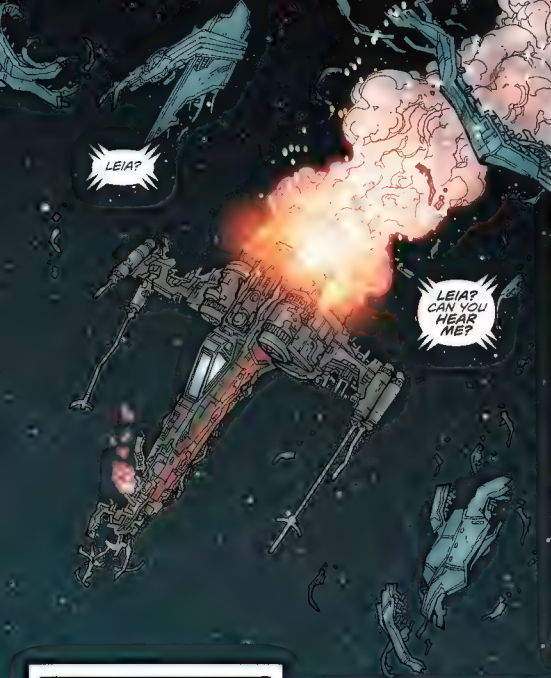
HE
WAS THERE
FOR ME WHEN
MY AUNT AND
UNCLE WERE
KILLED...

...AND
NOW HE'S
DEAD TOO.

I'M SORRY,
BUT LUKE, HE'S
NOT GONE,
IS HE?

I SAW
HIM.





LEIA?

LEIA?
CAN YOU
HEAR
ME?



WEDGE...

GET
OUT OF HERE,
WEDGE...

NO
CAN DO,
SENATOR.



R5, START
TALKING TO LEIA'S
ASTROMECH. SEE
WHAT YOU CAN
FIND OUT.

DON'T
BE A
FOOL...

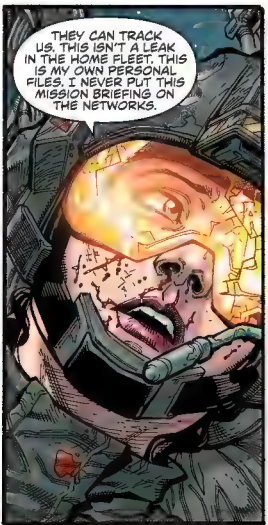
...THEY KNOW
WHERE WE ARE. THE
WHOLE SQUADRON'LL
BE DROPPING OUT OF
LIGHTSPEED ANY
MINUTE NOW.



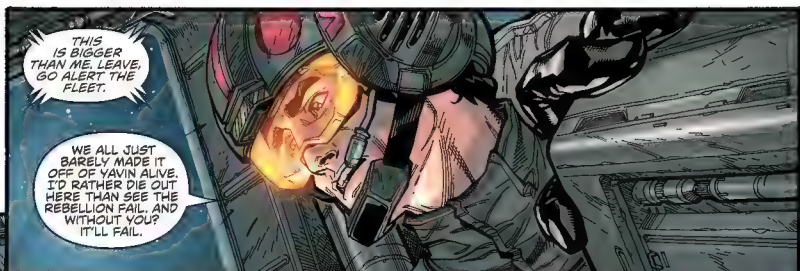
LEIA, IT'S
TESS. I HAVE A
TARGETING LOCK ON
OUR POINT OF ENTRY
AND WILL VAPORIZE
THE --

TESS,
THEY'LL COME
WITH THE STAR
DESTROYER.

WE'RE
NOT LEAVING
YOU.



THEY CAN TRACK
US. THIS ISN'T LEAK
IN THE HOME FLEET. THIS
IS MY OWN PERSONAL
FILES. I NEVER PUT THIS
MISSION BRIEFING ON
THE NETWORKS.



THIS IS BIGGER THAN ME. LEAVE. GO ALERT THE FLEET.

WE ALL JUST BARELY MADE IT OFF OF YAVIN ALIVE. I'D RATHER DIE OUT HERE THAN SEE THE REBELLION FAIL. AND WITHOUT YOU? IT'LL FAIL.



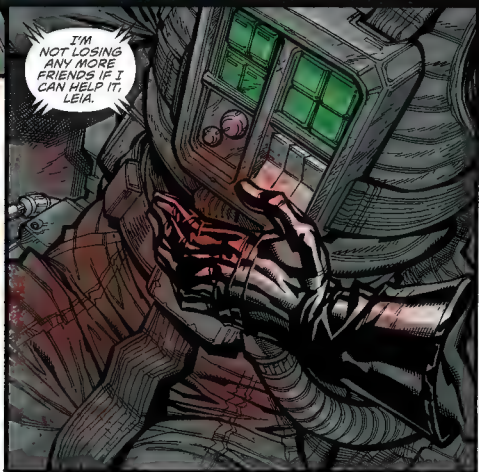
LEIA...

...WE'RE ALL HERE BECAUSE OF YOU. YOU INSPIRED THE WHOLE CAUSE. YOU INSPIRED ME TO BE BETTER THAN I WAS. AND WHEN YOU PICKED MY NAME FOR THIS UNIT OUT OF ALL THE OTHERS...?

I DON'T THINK I'D BE LIVING UP TO YOUR EXAMPLE BY LEAVING SOMEONE BEHIND TO SAVE MYSELF.



FOR A COUPLE OF MILITARY PILOTS, YOU ARE BOTH REALLY BAD AT FOLLOWING ORDERS.

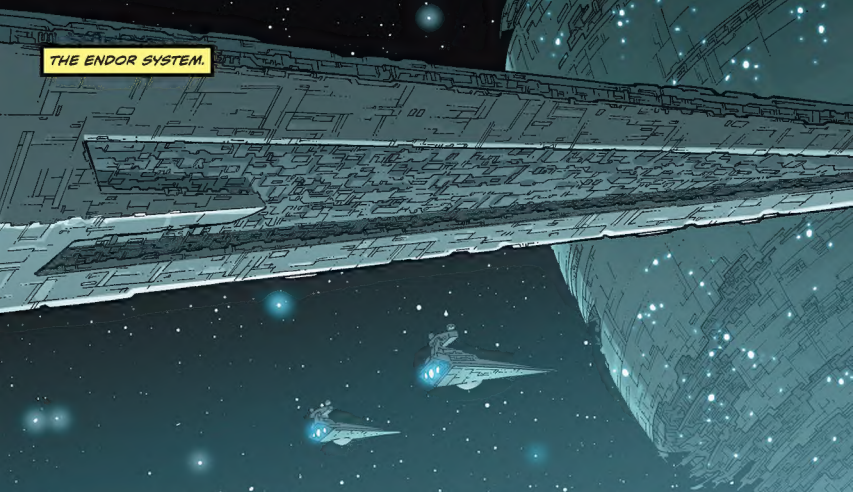


I'M NOT LOSING ANY MORE FRIENDS IF I CAN HELP IT, LEIA.



THANKS,
BOTH OF
YOU.

THE ENDOR SYSTEM.



THE ONE WHO EVADED ME AT YAVIN, AND WHO SUCCEEDED IN DESTROYING THE DEATH STAR.

THE ONE WHO WAS WITH OBI-WAN KENOBI, AND WHO RESCUED THE PRINCESS.



SKYWALKER.



THERE IS NO GREATER THREAT, NO GREATER NEED FOR MY ATTENTIONS AT THIS TIME.

YOUR RANK OF ACTING MOFF IS APPROVED, BIRRA SEAH, THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SECOND BATTLE STATION IS UNDER YOUR CONTROL.

THANK YOU, LORD VADER.



AND UPON
THE EMPEROR'S
ARRIVAL, YOU WILL
BRIEF HIM ON YOUR
PROGRESS.

PRAY IT IS TO
HIS SATISFACTION.
FAILURE AT THIS POINT
WILL MEAN A FATE FROM
WHICH NEITHER I, NOR
THE FORCE, CAN
PROTECT YOU.



Gabe

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**CONDITION
CRITICAL!**

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